



## Harford County Commission on Veterans Affairs Meeting Notes

**March 1, 2018**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Robert Brown at 6:30 p.m. in the Conference Room, 220 S. Main Street, Bel Air, Maryland.

**Attending:** Bob Brown, Hayden Anthony, Lisa Brown, James Castelli, Art Kaff, Scott Kearby, Larry Owens, Deacon Vic Petrosino, Mike Ray, Johnny Boker

**Excused:** Bill Montgomery, Bill Elliott, Patricia O'Keefe, Janice Cassidy, Pam Silcox, Mary Worthington, Councilman McMahan (liaison)

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Brown. Prayer was led by Deacon Vic.

### **Approval of Minutes:**

Minutes from the February HCCOVA meeting were sent to commission members for review prior to the March meeting. Scott Kearby motioned for approval of the minutes and Hayden Anthony seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved by commission members.

### **Opening Comments from Appointed Members:**

At Kaff- Reported the Facebook page has 347 likes

Larry Owens – Provided information and an article from the Aegis on privatization and technology at Aberdeen Proving Ground

Scott Kearby – Reported he has posted the agenda and updated minutes per the County Bylaw requirements. Reported he contacted Debbie Button regarding the Cellphones for Soldiers box. Mike Ray, who was recommended by the Chamber of Commerce to fill the retired William Suchting's role as representative from the Chamber, agreed to take the box.

Mike Ray – will take the box from the "Cell Phones for Soldiers" program to his office to collect used electronics (cell phones, GPS, laptops). Program recycles metal components and uses cash received to purchase phone cards for deployed service members.

Deacon Vic Petrosino – continues to visit & serve veterans at the hospital. Also attended the funeral for a 97 year old veteran.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

- Habitat for Humanity – Hayden Anthony
  - The veteran repair branch of this program is out of money for this year & the few remaining in the pipeline require contractor work (electrical, plumbing, etc.)
  - Other veteran building (such as Lowe's)/repair programs utilize employee-only volunteers.
  - Encouraged commission members to register on-line for safety training, so ready to volunteer if/when a Habitat project arises.
  - Andy Powell, American, discussed a project of assisting with renovating a house for a needy veteran. He will let the Commission know if this project is approved and he needs assistance with improvements/repairs to the house.
- Other assistance options of helping families of deployed military were discussed; no action taken.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Veterans Resource Fair 2018**

- This year, subcommittees will be formed for the major areas:
  - Marketing – newspapers, TV, flyers, social media
  - Facilities – set-up, teardown, permits, equipment
  - Food/Drinks – coordination, pricing, serving, supplies
  - Programming – guest speaker, singer, color guard, raffle, VIP invites, vendors
- Each commission member will choose a sub-committee.
- April 10<sup>th</sup>- Howard County's Resource Fair announcement for those that may want to attend

### **Independence Day Parades**

- Initial discussion on availability/interest of commission members to participate in the Bel Air Independence Day Parade, held on July 4<sup>th</sup>. The commission will obtain more information regarding the application process and participation.
- Johnny introduced the possibility of participating in the Havre de Grace Independence Day Parade, held on the Sunday prior to the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.
- Scott Kearby motioned to participate in both parades; Lisa Brown seconded. Commission members approved participation in both parades.
- Mike Ray will serve as coordinator/POC for the Bel Air parade; Johnny Boker will serve as coordinator/POC for the Havre de Grace Parade.

### **APG Retiree Appreciation Day**

- Retiree Appreciation Information fair held at APG on Saturday, May 12<sup>th</sup>
- APG requested HCCOVA sponsor a table at the fair
- Bob Brown, will attend fair; others are welcome.

**Commission Information Resource Project**

- In previous meeting there were suggestions for an on-line webpage to provide information & resources for commission members for their knowledge and in case they get requests from veterans. Suggestion made that we have a resource from information gained from presenters and vendors.

**Sub-committee Updates**

- Red shirt Fridays – Capt’n Jim’s message to wear a red shirt on Friday in support of veterans was provided.
- Harford County Gold Star Memorial dedication – Sunday, June 17<sup>th</sup> 2-3:30 PM
- Veterans Advocacy Day at Annapolis – several veteran-connected bills have passed the legislature. Senate Bill 509 (Veterans Education) discussed in previous meeting minutes; & Senate Bill 312 (Veterans Retirement Tax) was passed with amendments. More information/details about these bills will be discussed at next month’s meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 5, 2018.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Prepared by Lisa Brown